

DACOR/ LAC Discussion Group Lunch event: Dec. 12, 12 noon to 2 PM

Join the Latin American and Caribbean Luncheon Group at DACOR for a panel discussion on both the efficacy and credibility of recent and upcoming electoral processes in the region: what do they say about the state of democracy in LAC, and implications for the US and regional foreign policy. The panel will feature Ambassador Sebastian Kraljevich, Secretary for Strengthening Democracy, Organization of American States; Dr. Benjamin Gedan, Director of Latin America Programs, Stimson Center; and Ms. Deborah Ullmer, Director for Latin America, National Democratic Institute. They will focus on the election period of September 2025 - April 2026 including elections in Guyana (September 1), Bolivia (October 19), Argentina (October 26), Chile (November 16 and run-off December 14), Honduras (November 30), Costa Rica (February 1) and Peru (April 12).

The event's announcement/registration is available at <https://www.memberleap.com/Calendar/moreinfo.php?eventid=59682>

Sebastián Kraljevich has served as Secretary for Strengthening Democracy at the Organization of American States (OAS) since July 2025. He previously held the position of Permanent Representative of Chile to the OAS from April 2022 to July 2025. Between 2023 and 2024, he chaired the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs and the Voluntary Group for the Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter. In 2025, he also served as Chair of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP).

Secretary Kraljevich holds a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Chile, a Master's degree in Political Management from The George Washington University, and completed the Leadership, Public Narrative, and Action Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

He is a political scientist, strategist, and executive with over 20 years of experience in electoral processes, negotiation, public opinion research, and political consulting. Since 2012, he has served as an Adjunct Professor in the Master's Program in Political Science at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and as a visiting professor at universities in Chile, Mexico, Colombia, and the United States, as well as a lecturer for the UNESCO Chair.

Secretary Kraljevich has provided strategic and communications advice in Spain, Latin America, and the United States to authorities, political parties, and candidates across a broad political spectrum. He has also served as an

advisor to elected officials in national and subnational governments and institutions in various countries.

His previous roles include Account Coordinator at Fenton Communications in Washington, D.C.; Executive Secretary of the XXI IPSA World Congress of Political Science (2009); and Executive Secretary of the Presidential Commission for the Protection of Citizens' Rights in Chile (2007–2009).

Dr. Benjamin N. Gedan is a Senior Fellow and the Director of the Stimson Center Latin America program. He is an Adjunct Lecturer and Foreign Policy Fellow at the Latin America Studies Initiative at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and the former Director of Latin America Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Previously, he served as the South America Director on the National Security Council staff at the White House, managed Honduras and Argentina at the U.S. Department of State and had responsibility for Central America and the Caribbean as an international economist at the U.S. Treasury Department.

As a journalist, Gedan reported for *The Boston Globe*, *The Miami Herald*, and other publications. He is a former Fulbright scholar in Uruguay and earned a PhD in foreign affairs from SAIS. He graduated from Tufts University with a Bachelor's in international relations and received a Master's in international economics and Latin American studies from SAIS. He is a former term member and recipient of the International Affairs Fellowship at the Council on Foreign Relations.

As a Latin America scholar, Gedan has published opinion pieces in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Miami Herald*, and *Foreign Policy*, and his analysis has been cited by *The Economist*, the *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, the BBC, NPR, CNN, MSNBC, PBS NewsHour, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Bloomberg*, as well as leading media outlets in Latin America.

Deborah Ullmer is the Regional Director for Latin America and Caribbean Programs at the National Democratic Institute. She brings to the position more than 20 years of experience managing a range of democracy assistance and human rights programs. Most recently, she served as Freedom House's Director for Latin America and the Caribbean programs and as the chief of party for a USAID/Office of Transition Initiative's program in Nicaragua. Ms. Ullmer served at the National Democratic Institute from 1996 through 2018, where she focused primarily on the Latin America portfolio, with a brief foray

as deputy director for Southern and East Africa programs from 2010 to 2014.

Through her positions in Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras and Nicaragua, Ms. Ullmer has spent approximately twelve years working and living in Latin America. She served as senior country director for NDI in Honduras for a portfolio of projects ranging from citizen security, public integrity and transparency, human rights, election monitoring and political reform advocacy from 2014 to 2018. She also served as country director for NDI in Nicaragua for a political parties and elections strengthening program from 2004 to 2010. Additionally, she provided assistance to national election monitoring groups in Guatemala and Guyana, where she served as resident representative in 2003 and from 1996 to 1998, respectively. Ms. Ullmer also organized joint NDI/Carter Center international observation missions for presidential elections in the Palestinian Authority in 2005 and the Dominican Republic in 2000.

Earlier, she helped establish NDI's Latin American regional political leadership training program. In addition, she gained U.S. domestic and international fundraising experience as NDI's development director. Before joining the Institute, Ms. Ullmer spent three years as a legislative assistant with the office of Ohio Congressman David Hobson. She earned B.A. in Political Science and Modern Languages from Seton Hall University and has an Executive Master's degree in International Peace and Conflict Resolution from the American University's School of International Service.

Location

Setting: Hybrid

DACOR Bacon House OR Online

1801 F Street, NW

Washington, DC 20006

UNITED STATES

[Click here for Google Maps](#)

Contact Person

[DACOR Programs](#)

(phone: 202-682-0500 x120)